

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE**

Methods of evaluating access to Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) from alternate access connections and for improving access to VPNs from alternate access connections such as ISPs. The methods include downloading a set of tests through a network

- 5 backbone to simulate access to the VPN from the alternate access connection and comparing the results of the test to benchmarks for the test of access to the VPN from leased lines and modems. By obtaining comparisons of the tests and the benchmarks, it is possible to determine the throughput of data through the VPN and tell the customer how its access connections are affecting, among other things, the raw data throughput.
- 10 This allows the customer and/or the network service provider to adjust the access connections to improve communications with the VPN.

2000-0328, Cahn, R.